

What is the DCLG?

The National Cancer Institute (NCI), the Federal government's primary agency for cancer research, launched a landmark initiative, the Director's Consumer Liaison Group (DCLG) in December 1997. The DCLG is NCI's first and only *all-consumer* advisory body. It makes recommendations to the Director of NCI from the consumer advocate perspective on a wide variety of issues, programs, and research priorities.

As a high-level advisory body, the DCLG works with the NCI to help the Institute increase its involvement with the cancer advocacy community. Together they ensure that those who experience the burden of cancer also help to shape the course of NCI's efforts to eradicate this disease. The DCLG also provides the cancer advocacy community with a channel to voice their opinions and concerns.

What is the purpose of the DCLG?

The purposes of the DCLG are:

- To establish and maintain strong collaborations between NCI and this community to reach common goals;
- To provide recommendations to the Director of NCI in response to specific advice and requests from the Director and to the needs of the cancer advocacy community;
- To serve as a primary forum to discuss issues and concerns and exchange viewpoints that are important to the broad development of NCI program and research priorities;
- To assist in developing and establishing processes and criteria for identifying appropriate consumer advocates to serve on a variety of NCI program and policy advisory committees.

Who makes up the DCLG?

The DCLG reflects the diversity of those whose lives are affected by cancer. Members include cancer advocates and survivors, family members, and health care professionals. Each member is part of a constituency of people affected by cancer. These constituencies are as diverse as the group members themselves.

DCLG members represent a variety of multicultural and ethnic populations. Members are both men and women who represent a broad range of cancer sites and types. DCLG members come from grassroots organizations in small rural communities, cancer-specific foundations, large national organizations, statewide agencies, and organizations dedicated to minorities and other underserved segments of the cancer community. Each member brings a unique focus and contribution to fulfilling the mission of the DCLG.

Who is eligible to be a member of the DCLG?

A member of the DCLG must:

- Be involved in the cancer experience as a cancer survivor, a person affected by the suffering and consequences of cancer, or a professional/volunteer who works with survivors or those affected, and
- Be part of a constituency (formally or informally), communicate with them regularly on cancer issues, and be able to serve as a conduit for information both *to and from* the constituency, and
- Additionally, DCLG members must be committed to participating in all activities of the DCLG to include at least two meetings in the Washington, D.C. area and telephone conferences as needed.

How are eligible candidates further evaluated?

Nominees to the DCLG who meet the minimum eligibility requirements are further assessed based on the following criteria:

- Cancer advocacy experience
- Ability to communicate effectively
- Willingness to consider broad cancer issues
- Ability to contribute to an effective group process
- Leadership skills

How does the official selection process take place?

A call for nominations is usually disseminated annually to a broad range of groups. Nominations come from members of organizations or individuals, including self-nominations. Nominees are screened for eligibility and then evaluated according to the criteria. A list of highly qualified candidates that reflects balance and diversity of representation is forwarded to the Director of NCI, who selects the DCLG members.

What is the DCLG currently working on?

In 2003, the DCLG surveyed over 150 cancer advocacy organizations. The survey found that the cancer advocacy community wants the DCLG to help it enhance collaboration with NCI. As a result of the evidence supplied by this survey, facilitating a transparent dialogue between NCI and the advocacy community became a top priority for the DCLG.

NCI and the DCLG are creating the Web site *NCI Listens and Learns* as a mechanism for this to take place. *NCI Listens and Learns* is a forum for NCI and the DCLG to have a true dialogue with members of the cancer advocacy community. The Web site aims to increase the amount of high quality input received from advocacy organizations and the public on NCI's strategic plans, initiatives or questions in various stages of development.

What other topics are of special interest to the DCLG and what type of work does the DCLG do in these areas?

The DCLG is interested in a variety of topics including two of special interest to NCI Director Dr. Andrew C. von Eschenbach: cancer survivorship and reducing cancer health disparities.

For additional information about the DCLG visit <http://la.cancer.gov/dclg.html>.

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Related Topics

The NCI's Office of Liaison Activities supports the Institute's research and related programs by fostering strong communications and relationships with the cancer advocacy community, professional societies, scientific organizations, and Federal Agencies. For further information on other programs and partnerships coordinated by this office visit <http://la.cancer.gov>.

To receive news tailored to the cancer advocacy community subscribe to the NCI Cancer Advocates E-News. To subscribe: e-mail listserv@list.nih.gov, and type "subscribe cancer-advocates" in the body of the message.

National Cancer Institute Resources

NCI Cancer Bulletin

Subscribe to the NCI Cancer Bulletin to get the latest news from NCI
<http://cancer.gov/ncicancerbulletin>

Cancer Information Service

Toll-free: 1-800-4-CANCER (1-800-422-6237)
TTY (for deaf and hard of hearing callers): 1-800-332-8615

NCI Online

Internet

Use <http://cancer.gov> to reach NCI's Web site

LiveHelp

Cancer Information Specialists offer online assistance through the [LiveHelp](#) link on the NCI's Web site.